

### **IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as follows.

Claims 1-5 (canceled)

Claim 6 (currently amended): A screw element as set forth in claim [5] 12, wherein the spring element has a relatively flat spring characteristic.

Claim 7 (previously presented): A screw element as set forth in claim 6, wherein the spring element is of lower hardness than the screw element.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A screw element as set forth in claim [7] 12, wherein the spring element has projections in the region of the workpiece contact.

Claim 9 (currently amended): A screw having a head in the form of the screw element as set forth in claim [8] 12, wherein the screw is of a thread-forming ~~and self-~~  
~~boring~~ nature.

Claim 10 (currently amended): A screw connection between two workpieces of which at least one is a metal plate or a plastic element, with a screw element as set forth in claim [9] 12, wherein only the spring element and it bears with a predetermined prestressing force against the adjoining workpiece.

Claim 11 (canceled)

Claim 12 (new): A screw element having a screw axis, comprising:  
a tool engagement element; and  
a spring element having a free edge;  
wherein the spring element is formed on the screw element in one piece;

wherein the spring element is coaxial with the screw axis;  
wherein the free edge defines a workpiece contact plane which is perpendicular to the screw axis and is spaced axially from the screw element;  
wherein the spring element is mounted at the periphery of the screw element;  
wherein the spring element projects radially beyond the periphery;  
wherein the spring element forms a workpiece contact which is disposed outside the periphery of the screw element and is concentric with the screw axis;  
wherein the spring element is a ring which is concentric around the screw axis;  
wherein the spring element has a workpiece contact which is annular throughout;  
wherein the ring has a plurality of openings distributed uniformly over its periphery; and  
wherein the spring element is adapted to prevent the pre-stressing effect for the screw connection being lost by virtue of changes in length thus ensuring sufficient frictional force to prevent the screw connection becoming unscrewed.

Claim 13 (new): A screw having a head in the form of the screw element as set forth in claim 9, wherein the screw is of a self-boring nature.